Salt Lake City,
June 1, 1893.

President F. A. Hammond, and

Sunday School Supt. James B. Decker,

San Juan Stake of Zion:

DEAR BRETHREN: During the last few years the advance made in the principles of secular education has seemed to demand like progress in the methods employed in our Sunday Schools in imparting that most important part of all true education—indeed, its foundation and finish—a knowledge of God and His laws. We found, however, that owing to the varied conditions by which the Sunday Schools of the Saints were surrounded and influenced, it was the wiser policy to "make haste slowly", and not to attempt to bring about too radical changes as a beginning. One step, nevertheless, seemed imperative if the schools were to progress, and that was the introduction of greater uniformity in the manner in which they were to be conducted. To effect this, an experimental normal course, with classes of five weeks' duration, was established in connection with the Brigham Young Academy of Provo. Four different classes of this course have successively met and through experience therein gained, a point has now been reached when it is deemed prudent to take the preliminary steps to extend this system to all the Stakes of Zion.

Some surprise has been expressed that only one course of this description was inaugurated, and the question has been asked, "Why not have established like training classes in Salt Lake City, Ogden, Logan, and elsewhere?" Our answer is, We were not prepared for it; we did not know exactly what was most needed, and the simultaneous establishment of a number of such courses in different places would have thwarted our efforts and nullified our labors by producing, instead of uniformity, increased diversity, the very thing we were striving to diminish and remove.

We hope, in the near future, to have one or more of these normal courses established in every Stake of Zion, held, as a rule, in connection with the Church Stake Academy wherever such an institution exists. To accomplish this, the next thing needful appears to us to be a corps of trained instructors who can become teachers of teachers in the various Stakes, and we have decided to call, as on a mission, suitable brethren and sisters from each Stake of Zion to attend a twenty weeks normal course which we are arranging to have held during the coming Academic year at the Brigham Young Academy, Provo. When they have passed through this course we shall expect them to labor in establishing like classes in the Stake from which they are sent. In these duties they will act in unison with the Board of the Deseret Sunday School Union, to whose care is intrusted the general supervision of all Sunday School work and the arrangement of details.

The number that we desire sent from your Stake is 2 and we should be pleased to receive from you, after mutual consultation, a number of names of worthy members of the Church acquainted with and interested in Sunday School work whom you deem suitable for such a mission. In making these selections it will be well to take into consideration the duties those called will have to perform. Their particular fields of labor will, most generally, be as teachers in the Stake normal courses, Stake Sunday School missionaries and, in some cases, ward superintendents. It will thus be evident to you that a variety of talent is necessary, some with special aptitude for primary class teaching, others proficient in more

advanced instruction, while some should be selected in recognition of their abilities as teachers of Music. Nor would it be well to submit the names of those who, though capable and adapted for this special work, will, through their circumstances or residence, not have the opportunity of laboring in this field.

Tuition to these courses will be free to those thus called. One course will take up at the commencement of the Academic year next August, the other after the Christmas holidays. Those attending the first twenty weeks will be prepared to commence their labors with the new year (1894), when we hope to have Stake Normal Classes opened in every available Stake. In your answer, which we trust will be prompt, we desire you to state which course, (the first or second) each person whom you name desires to attend. And in your conversations with those whom you select we wish you to impress upon them that the call will be made by the First Presidency of the Church and have the same weight and importance and be accounted in the same light as a foreign mission.

Your brethren in the gospel,

Wilford Woodruff

Geo. Q. Cannon

Jos. F. Smith

First Presidency of the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.